

building temples. not only to manifest his feelings of veneration but to enshrine conceptions of immortality. asceticism and purity which condemn what daily happens around him. Most strange of all is his respect for celibacy. which directly conflicts with the strongest of human instincts, and, if generally practised, would altogether extinguish human society. Yet down the vistas of history we see it enshrined by the admiration of mankind. Centuries before the time of Buddha it was the ideal of Indian sages. It is a vivid feature in the life history of Christ. It was commended by the earliest Christian teachers. and at one time afforded to vast numbers of their disciples a refuge from the pagan wickedness of the world. It has come down to us as an honoured institution of the Roman Church. Protestantism has rejected it: but not without some regret—some echoes of an admiration so finely expressed by a Protestant poet:—

Thrice blessed whose lives are faithful
prayers.

Whose loves in higher love endure ;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs ?

If man is an organism which owes its development to natural circumstances. whence come his ideas condemning these circumstances ? Whence does he derive this strange conflict of impulses, that urge him at one time to self-indulgence. and another to self-denial—this antagonism which has been figured as between the Spirit and the Flesh ?

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As to the nature of Life, philosophers have been theorizing for centuries. There are some who hold that it is the appendage of a particular chemical compound; this might be produced in a laboratory